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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if a representative sample of Nigerian teachers and educational administrators were in agreement with the basic tenets of the U.S. Office of Education career education model. A 31-item survey instrument was sent to 120 teachers and administrators from two Nigerian states and the federal capital of Nigeria (Lagos). Data collected from the ninety-four returned instruments support the notion that the basic concepts of career education in the U.S. are congruent with many of the concerns of Nigerian educators. Additional findings were (1) in this sample of administrators and teachers, there were no significant differences in responses; (2) the majority of respondents agreed that many Nigerian students leave the educational system without having made conscious career decisions; (3) the majority of the respondents agreed that many students leave the Nigerian educational system with little or no knowledge of the basic skills which employers require; and (4) the majority of respondents agreed that adequate provisions for continuing education for adults was lacking and that educational opportunities should be made available for all citizens. (LRA)

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THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFELONG CAREER DEVELOPMENT AS PERCEIVED BY NIGERIAN TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS*

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1971, the growth of the career education movement in the United States has been phenomenal (Gardner, 1976; Gardner and Warren, 1978; Hoyt, 1975).[1] The remarkable acceptance of this movement by laymen and professionals alike may in large part be attributed to a recognition that many of the social problems inherent in a highly technological, work oriented culture can be ameliorated by a reformation of the current educational system. This reform calls for the recognition of the worth and importance of an education which includes a focus on each individual's career development.

Since 1960, there has been rapid movement in Nigeria towards expansion of industry and business, the development of human services, and a reform of the educational system to include provisions for a public education for all citizens. In 1977, the Republic of Nigeria published a national policy on education. The philosophy and objectives of this policy emphasize lifelong education, a respect for the dignity of work, the inculcation of appropriate values and attitudes for survival in Nigerian society, and the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities, and competencies (cognitive, affective, and motor) by individuals so that each citizen can live in and contribute to Nigerian society.[2]

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[1] Gardner, D. C. "Career education." In: Scott, M. (Ed.) The Essential Profession, Stamford, CT: Greylock Publishers, 1976; Gardner, D. C. and Warren, S. A. Careers and Disabilities: A Career Education Approach, Stamford, CT: Greylock Publishers, 1978; Hoyt, K. B. An Introduction to Career Education: A Policy Paper of the U. S. Office of Education, Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1975.

[2] Federal Republic of Nigeria National Policy on Education, Lagos, Nigeria, 1977.

It is obvious, if one reads the Nigerian policy on education that its national goals are those found in all free, industrialized nations. As Nigeria develops technologically, one might predict that many of the problems of highly developed, industrialized nations will emerge. It might therefore, be appropriate to consider the development of a Nigerian career education model especially since many of the concepts of career education as developed by Hoyt[3] and others are either present or can be inferred from many of the Nigerian national educational objectives. As a first step in approaching this issue, the purpose of this study was to ascertain if a representative sample of Nigerian teachers and educational administrators were in agreement with the basic tenets of the U.S.O.E. Career Education Model.

METHOD

Survey Instrument

A 31 item Likert-type scale (Strongly Agree, Mildly Agree, No Opinion, Mildly Disagree, Strongly Disagree) was developed from an initial pool of 56 items. The criterion for selection was that 10 out of 12 of the judges had to reach consensus on each item as being consistent with Nigerian educational policy[4] and the basic constructs of the U.S.O.E. policy on career education.[5] The judges consisted of 2 career education professionals from the U.S.A. and 10 Nigerian educators. Test-retest reliability was established at r=.80; p=.01 with 10 Nigerian teachers from 2 Nigerian states. Figure 1 reports the distribution of the 31 items as they relate to Nigerian educational policy/philosophy[6]

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[3] Hoyt, An Introduction to Career Education.

[4] Nigeria National Policy on Education.

[5] Hoyt, An Introduction to Career Education.

[6] Nigeria National Policy on Education

and to the 10 basic assumptions of career education.[7]

(SEE FIGURE 1 ON NEXT PAGE)

Sample

The sample consisted of 120 teachers and administrators from 2 Nigerian states and the feceral capital of Nigeria (Lagos). From personnel lists provided by the Federal Ministry of Education and individual state schools, a stratified, random sample of 120 subjects was selected from a pool of approximately 500 names. The sample selected consisted of 40 school administrators, 30 post secondary faculty members, 25 secondary teachers and 25 elementary teachers. Clearance for the study was given by the Federal Ministry of Education.

PROCEDURES

School Administrators

Each school administrator was personally handed the survey instrument by the first author and was asked to complete and return the survey instrument in the envelope provided.

Post Secondary Faculty, Secondary, and Elementary Teachers

The survey instrument was delivered to each teacher personnally by either one of two special couriers or the first author.

RESULTS

Total return rate was 78% (N=94). Return rates by subgroups were: (1) 85%=administrators; (2) 67%=post secondary faculty; (3) 80%=elementary and secondary teachers. Considering the inevitable delays and mix-ups in mail

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[7]Hoyt, An Introduction to Career Education.

FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIPS OF SURVEY ITEMS TO TEN BASIC CAREER EDUCATION ASSUMPTIONS (1975) AND NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Ten Basic USOE Career Education Assumptions[1]	Nigerian Educational Philosophy Statement[2]	Item No. on Survey[3]
1. Since both one's career and one's education extend from the preschool through the retirement years, career education must also span almost the entire life cycle.	SS2; SS7(2); SS7(5)	14, 28, 11
2. The concept of productivity is central to the definition of work and so to the entire concept of career education.	SS5(4)	5, 6, 13, 2
3. Since "work" includes unpaid activities as well as paid employment, career education's concerns, in addition to its prime emphasis on paid employment, extend to the work of the student as a learner, to the growing numbers of volunteer workers in our society, to the work of the full-time homemaker, and to work activities in which one engages as part of leisure and/or recreational time.	SS5(3); SS7(10)	3, 14, 19, 26, 29
4. The cosmopolitan nature of today's society demands that career education embrace a multiplicity of work values, rather than a single work ethic, as a means of helping each individual answer the question, "why should I work?"	SS3(5); SS5(2); SS5(3); SS7(5); SS5(10)	2, 3, 17, 18, 19, 20
5. Both one's career and one's education are best viewed in a developmental rather than in a fragmented sense.	SS7(2); SS7(4); SS7(10)	9, 11, 23, 28, 24, 27

NOTES:
1. From USOE policy paper on career education (Hoyt, 1975, pp. 4-5).
2. Refers to items in Section 1, "Philosophy of Nigerian Education," National Policy on Education, 1977, pp. 4-5. SS = subsection; ( ) item number in subsection.
3. Actual number on survey instrument. Copies available on request from authors.

FIGURE 1 (continued)

Ten Basic USOE Career Education Assumptions[1]	Nigerian Educational Philosophy Statement[2]	Item No. on Survey[3]
6. Career education is for all persons--including the young and the old, the mentally handicapped and the intellectually gifted, the poor and the wealthy, males and females, students in elementary schools and in graduate colleges.	SS2; SS6; SS7(5)	3, 9, 12, 23
7. The societal objectives of career education are to help all individuals to: (a) want to work, (b) acquire the skills necessary for work in these times, and (c) engage in work that is satisfying to the individual and beneficial to society.	SS1; SS3(4); SS3(5); SS4; SS5(4); SS7(6)	3, 5, 16, 21, 25
8. The individualistic goals of career education are to make work (a) possible, (b) meaningful, and (c) satisfying for each individual throughout his or her lifetime.	SS3(1); SS3(2); SS3(5); SS5(2); SS5(3); SS5(4)	3. 4, 7, 18
9. Protection of the individual's freedom to choose--and assistance in making and implementing career decisions--are of central concern to career education	SS3(1); SS3(2); SS3(5); SS3(6); SS5(4); SS7(3); SS7(10)	10, 15, 30, 31
10. The expertise required for implementing career education exists in many parts of society and is not limited to those employed in formal education.	SS3(4); SS5(3); SS6 SS7(3); SS7(5); SS7(6); SS7(10)	1, 8, 20, 22, 27

NOTES:

1. From USOE policy paper on career education (Hoyt, 1975, pp. 4-5).
2. Refers to items in Section 1, "Philosophy of Nigerian Education," National Policy on Education, 1977, pp. 4-5. SS = Subsection; ( ) item number in subsection.
3. Actual number on survey instrument. Copies available on request from the authors.

service from Nigeria to the United States, return rate was relatively high.

For purposes of chi square analysis,[8] for each survey item, cells 1, 2, 3, (Strongly Disagree, Mildly Disagree, No Opinion) were combined and compared to the combined responses in cells 4, 5 (Strongly Agree, Mildly Agree). All 4, 5 cells for all 31 items were summed and all 1, 2, 3 cells for all items were summed for two groups: (1) administrators, and (2) all faculty. Chi square comparison found no significant differences in the response patterns of the 2 groups (x^2=.0005, p=NS). Thus, all groups were combined in all subsequent analyses.

For 30 of the 31 items, the respondents significantly agreed (Strongly or Mildly Agree). All chi squares, with the exception of item 13, were significant at the .01 level of confidence. For item 13, the significance level approached the .05 level (p=.10).

Table 1 reports the results for selected key career education concepts (items) in the instrument. For purposes of brevity, the actual items have been paraphrased.

(SEE TABLE 1 ON NEXT PAGE)

The underlying assumption of this study was that the tenets of the USOE career education model are universal. That is, concern with the lifelong career development of individuals should be a major focus of a public education system, regardless of whether the education system is one provided by a highly technological nation or a developing country. The findings of this study support the notion that the basic concepts of career education in the United States are congruent with many of the concerns of Nigerian educators, at least those in this sample. The following findings seem pertinent in this preliminary study of the readiness of Nigerian educators for acceptance of the basic concepts

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[8]Siegel, Sidney. Nonparametric Statistics for the Behaviorial Sciences, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956.

TABLE 1

DO NIGERIAN EDUCATORS AGREE THAT CAREER EDUCATION IS NEEDED?
Chi Square Analysis of Selected Items from a National Survey
N=94

	Strongly plus Mildly Agree %	Strongly Agree	Chi Square*
1. Parents, labor, employers, community should participate in school activities.	95.7	85.1	78.68
2. High school students graduate without knowledge of the basic skills required by employers.	85.1	54.2	46.34
3. Many workers are not placed in the areas of their field of study.	84.0	47.9	43.57
4. Educational objectives should include teaching of appropriate values and attitudes towards work.	100	93.6	94.00
5. Understanding the relationship between what is learned in school and the world of work, will motivate the students to learn more.	100	78.7	94.00
6. Training students to understand the world of work and the economic system is a responsibility of the school.	76.6	39.4	26.60
7. Classroom instruction should help students to appreciate the value and importance of work.	77.7	42.6	28.77
8. Schools should give emphasis to the study of occupations, professions, and business to help students decide on future careers.	95.7	70.2	78.68

TABLE 1 (continued)

	Strongly plus Mildly Agree %	Strongly Agree	Chi Square*
9. Students leaving the educational system rarely make planned and conscious decisions regarding their own career.	86.2	49.0	49.19
10. Making planned career decisions will reduce unemployment and misplacement.	94.7	54.3	75.06
11. Adult workers lack opportunity to continue formal education.	84.0	57.4	43.57
12. Education is for everybody.	95.7	84.0	78.68
13. General career information should be provided to all students.	99.0	87.2	90.04
14. There is need for retraining even when a person becomes established in a career	95.7	83.0	78.68
15. Career education should begin from early childhood and continue lifelong.	89.6	76.6	58.26
16. There is little or no counseling in elementary and secondary schools.	92.6	97.7	68.09

*All chi squares were significant at the .01 level of confidence.

of career education as inferred from the Nigerian national education philosophy:

1. In this sample of administrators and teachers, there were no significant differences in responses. One can conclude that, at least for this sample, Nigerian educators, regardless of job function or level, hold the same, positive opinions about the importance of these basic career education tenets.

2. The majority of respondents agreed that many Nigerian students leave the educational system without having made conscious career decisions. Moreover, there appears to be little or no counseling in the elementary and secondary schools. The respondents agree that career planning will have a positive impact on unemployment and misemployment in Nigeria. They also concur that general career information should be provided for all students.

3. The majority of the respondents agreed that many students leave the Nigerian educational system with little or no knowledge of the basic skills which employers require. This finding is consonant with the finding that the majority also agreed that more emphasis should be placed on involving parents, employers, labor, and community groups in the formal educational process.

4. The respondents also significantly agreed that adequate provisions for continuing education for adults was lacking. They noted that there is little opportunity for adults to continue their formal education and that there is a definite need for retraining programs, even when a person has chosen a career path. These findings are consonant with the respondents agreement that many workers are not placed in their own fields of study.

5. Nigerian respondents agreed that educational opportunities should be made available for all citizens. They also concurred on the following:

   a. Schools have the responsibility for helping students gain an appreciation of the world of work and the economic system. This includes the teaching of appropriate work values and attitudes.

b. Schools should also provide students with occupational information for decision making.

c. Students will be more motivated to learn if they can develop an understanding of the relationship between what they learn in school and the world of work.

DISCUSSION

The "career education" movement in the United States has its roots in many philosophical, historical, psychological, and sociological trends in America extending from the beginning of this century:

> "The writings of John Dewey, David Snedden, Donald Super, and Talcot Parsons are representative of a recognition on the part of many Americans that our society needs to accept the importance of work as it relates to both the economic and the psychological well being of each citizen. Moreover, this recognition must lead to the effective establishment of a 'marriage' between the 'academic' and the 'vocational!'"[9]

This study found that Nigerian educators also recognize the importance of addressing the career development needs of its citizens. Apparently, the effects of the failure of a public education system to give equal importance to the vocational aspects of human development are as equally evident to educators in a developing country as they are in a post industrial society.

In defining the strategies for the implementation of its new education policy, Nigerian educators clearly need to focus on the many aspects of its program and curriculum development which present opportunities to address these needs. In particular, the findings of this study clearly suggest that more emphasis should be given to providing Nigerians with basic skills for employment, continuing educational programs for adults, effective career guidance, and counseling at all age levels, improved job placement services

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[9] Gardner, D.C. and Warren, S.A. "Teacher's knowledge of the relationship between reading and work." Illinois Career Education Journal, 1977, 34(1), pp. 27-28.

for citizens and increased involvement of parents, labor, employers, and the community in the educational system. It also seems clear that Nigeria should consider conducting a more in-depth study of the public education curriculum as it may relate to the career development needs of its citizens.

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